

Operating Plan 2000



MISSION:

The mission of the Office of Epidemiologic Studies is to expand the understanding of health effects of radiation, chemicals, and other hazards to Department of Energy workers and the public. The Office uses its expertise and abilities to assist in the identification and application of effective public-health approaches to prevent illness and injury.

Director's Message

As the Department of Energy (DOE) moves forward in its evolution as a Federal agency, the responsibilities for programs within the Office of Epidemiologic Studies (EH-62) continue to expand. The management of public health activities conducted by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registries (ATSDR) was transferred to EH in FY 1999. Now all health studies and public health activities conducted for DOE by Department of Health and Human Service (HHS) agencies are consolidated under the Assistant Secretary for Environment, Safety, and Health.

We are significantly amending how health studies and public health activities are conducted at DOE. Beginning in 1999, DOE requested that HHS work with us to jointly develop a unified health studies agenda. The goals of this agenda are to ensure that health studies and public health activities at DOE sites focus on understanding the health effects and risks associated with work at DOE, that activities among the HHS agencies are not duplicated, that funds are concentrated on activities that provide the greatest benefit, and that the expectations of workers and members of communities around DOE sites are met.

EH-62's intramural program also continues to grow and expand. The Epidemiologic Surveillance Program has become increasingly important as the only multi-site program that looks at current health problems in the workplace. Epidemiologic surveillance reports have been revised to encourage readership among workers and management. The Office has initiated a Beryllium Registry for current and former workers. The Office serves as a linchpin in communicating health information to workers, the community, and other government organizations through on-site meetings, public involvement, and written health communications. The Office continues to make data from health studies available through the Comprehensive Epidemiologic Data Resource (CEDR), a public-use database available through the Internet.

Please take a moment to review our operating plan and visit our web site at <http://www.eh.doe.gov/epi>.

Heather Stockwell, Sc.D.
Director, Office of Epidemiologic Studies
(301) 903-3721





Core Values

These core values are the fundamental operating principles of our Office.

Professional

Our activities are guided by a professional code of conduct. Each staff member is accountable for individual decisions and work products; provides independent creative approaches to problem solving; and produces quality products on time.

Interpersonal

We are people oriented. We value our integrity and abide by ethical guidelines for practicing public health. We work well together and support each other. We subscribe to a philosophy that values differences of opinion in our approach to problem solving.

Organizational

We value organization. Through it we accomplish our mission. Our organization is customer-oriented, cooperative in a constructive and understanding manner, flexible, and consensus-building in our approach.



Business Lines

Health Communications

Vision: Provide occupational and environmental health information to the DOE community and the public.

Intramural Health Studies

Vision: Understand the health effects associated with occupational exposures and identify emerging health problems in the DOE workplace.

Health Studies Management

Vision: Support a program of extramural occupational and environmental health research.

Accomplishments 1998-1999



Intramural Health Studies

The Epidemiologic Surveillance Program implemented epidemiologic surveillance at Oak Ridge Y-12 facility and established a dosimetry data module. It also completed vital status and residence review of former BNL workers as part of a worker cancer assessment. The Epidemiologic Surveillance reports were revised to encourage wider readership among workers and management.

CEDR added 8 new data file sets, upgraded its server to a Sparc 1000, developed and printed a revised catalog, and published an article about the program in an international peer reviewed journal.

The data requirements and dictionary for the Beryllium Registry were developed. Coordinating activities with the beryllium sites were begun. General statistics on the programs were collected and distributed.

Health Communications

The Comprehensive Epidemiologic Data Resource (CEDR) continued to add data from completed studies. CEDR is an important tool for scientific inquiry especially for those studies that have new or controversial results. The availability of study data through CEDR continues to emphasize DOE's openness policy and focus on the conduct of high quality science.

Epidemiology News was launched in the Summer of 1998 and has published two issues to date with a third issue in preparation.

Staff continued to be active working with stakeholders and attending public meetings at various sites around the complex.

The draft site specific public health agenda for DOE was completed and made available for public comment.

The DOE state health agreement projects for SRS, Rocky Flats were completed. The Oak Ridge Project is essentially completed with the final panel reports and materials for public distribution scheduled to be available in Jan-Feb 2000

The USTUR successfully transferred to new management with the retirement of the former principal investigator. The USTUR produced a number of peer reviewed articles, collaborated in the development of a similar registry in Russia and made a number of scientifically important observations regarding body burdens of transuranics and health outcomes.

Accomplishments 1998-1999



Health Studies Management

The ATSDR program was transferred by Congress from EM to EH. A DOE manager was named for the program and began work immediately with ATSDR and site operations offices ensuring a smooth transition.

Funding for HHIN was transferred from Richland Operations Office to ATSDR, consistent with the new IAG with ATSDR

An Interagency agreement between DOE and ATSDR was established

A joint MOU incorporating all HHS agencies was developed and is now going through the concurrence process at DOE

ATSDR completed a draft health assessment for Paducah.

NCEH initiated a document discovery project at LANL to identify documents related to off-site releases of chemicals and/or radionuclides that may have the potential to affect the health of members of the communities surrounding LANL.

The Savannah River Site dose reconstruction project completed Phase 2, source term of released chemicals and radionuclides. The report of phase is under review by the National Academy of Sciences.

NIOSH researchers completed studies of multiple myeloma in the DOE workforce, the impact of parental preconception exposure to radiation and cancer in their offspring and a study of the mortality experience of Mallinckrodt workers.

Business Line: Intramural Health Studies



Epidemiologic Surveillance

Program Manager: Clifton H. Strader, Ph.D., (301) 903-5799

The goals of epidemiologic surveillance are to monitor morbidity and assess the overall health of the DOE workforce, and to identify groups that may be at increased risk for occupational injury and illness. Epidemiologic surveillance supports the DOE's only multisite health information data base linked to current workers. The program facilitates interventions that reduce or eliminate risk and provides a means by which the effectiveness of these corrective actions can be measured. The goals are accomplished through the routine collection, analysis, and interpretation of selected morbidity, demographic, and occupational exposure data. In response to indications of excess risk, the Office of Epidemiologic Studies assesses the need for additional investigations according to an established protocol. The program provides timely health information about the DOE labor force and is a resource for rapid response to health concerns raised by stakeholders. Annual reports, available at DOE reading rooms and distributed throughout the sites, summarize the results of epidemiologic surveillance at participating sites. The Epidemiologic Surveillance Program is a response to DOE's legislative mandate (Atomic Energy Act of 1954, Energy Reorganization Act of 1974, and Department of Energy Organization Act, 1977) to monitor the impact of its operations on the environment, the health of its workforce, and the residents of communities surrounding DOE sites.

Goals for 2000

- To establish the dosimetry exposure data module

- To complete analysis of cancer incidence review for former and current Brookhaven National Laboratory workers.

- To conduct additional special analyses of DOE workers.

- To implement Epidemiologic Surveillance at the ORNL, Y-12, and K-25 facilities at Oak Ridge

- To assess the feasibility of adding tobacco use data to the exposure data module

Business Line: Intramural Health Studies

Beryllium Exposure Registry



Program Manager: Claudia Beach, RN COHN (301) 903-9826

DOE has used beryllium metal in many nuclear applications over the past several decades. Workers who inhale beryllium dust or particles can develop a chronic, irreversible, and sometimes fatal lung disease known as Chronic Beryllium Disease (CBD). The disease has a delayed onset, meaning that it may appear years after exposure has ceased. Although not always a fatal disease, serious cases of CBD can be debilitating and shorten life expectancy. Since 1991, a screening program at Rocky Flats and at Oak Ridge has examined more than 7,000 workers and identified 94 workers with CBD. This screening program has been expanded to other DOE sites.

The Office is establishing a beryllium exposure registry that will include all current and former beryllium workers. The goals of the registry are to provide early guidance as to the effectiveness of exposure control mechanisms and intervention programs and assess the burden of health effects related to beryllium exposure. It will facilitate the conduct of epidemiologic studies and health surveillance programs to better identify those at risk.

Goals for 2000

- To implement the registry at DOE sites with current exposure to beryllium.
- To provide technical assistance to sites during implementation.

Business Line: Health Communications



Comprehensive Epidemiologic Data Resource (CEDR)

Program Manager: Barbara Brooks, M.S. (301) 903-4674

A major Office of Epidemiologic Studies' program that reflects the Department's continuing commitment to openness is CEDR. It is a public-use repository of data collected during more than 35 years of DOE-sponsored epidemiologic, environmental, and related health studies. The CEDR program is dedicated to providing access to these hundreds of data files and to ensuring that current studies are documented and made available to researchers and the public. The offer of these data, at no cost, optimizes their utilization for a wide variety of purposes, and ensures that CEDR continues to encourage improved understanding of the health effects of radiation and chemicals on workers and communities. Visit CEDR on the Internet at <http://cedr.lbl.gov>

Goals for 2000

- To install at least 3 additional data file sets and their associated documentation.
- To operationalize the CEDR Quality Assurance Program
- To organize and link a CEDR library with CEDRView
- To continue to refine CEDR information services

Health Bulletins



Program Manager: Claudia Beach, RN COHN (301) 903-9826

Health Bulletins are a series of publications produced by the Office that address issues and concerns that are important to the DOE workforce. The bulletins often include information from articles on the results of studies that analyzed the health of DOE workers or the community at a particular site. Other bulletins report information relevant to workers, such as a study of the risk of using video display terminals. The bulletins are written in language meant to inform and make complex research findings more accessible to the non-technical reader.

Goals for 2000

- To distribute Health Bulletins when study results are published.

Epidemiology News

Program Manager: Marsha Lawn (301) 903-3721

Epidemiology News was developed in 1998 as a general newsletter to our customers and stakeholders about health studies and public health activities being conducted at DOE sites. Reports have included a summary of ongoing HHS activities, issues involving human subjects, the transfer of ATSDR to EH-62 and the findings of newly published studies and reports.

Goals for 2000

- To publish Epidemiology News twice yearly.

Business Line: Health Studies Management



U.S. Transuranium and Uranium Registries (USTUR)

Program Manager: Barbara G. Brooks, M.S. (301) 903-4674

USTUR is a major component of DOE's long-standing programs to improve our ability to estimate internal doses attributable to the intake of plutonium and uranium and other long-lived, alpha-emitting radioactive materials. Based on voluntary enrollment of occupationally exposed individuals, the Registries have become a unique resource of data, radioanalytical capabilities, and research materials. USTUR includes the operation of two catalogued repositories, the National Human Radiobiology Tissue Repository and the National Radiobiology Archive of Tissues from animal studies, to ensure that donated tissues and histopathology slides are available for use by all interested researchers. These resources are fundamental to the Registries' continued success in refining biokinetic models and radiological standards that are in worldwide use to help ensure safe working conditions. Visit the USTUR web site at <http://www.tricity.wsu.edu/~ustur>

Goals for 2000

- To evaluate current radiation protection standards in terms of registry study findings
- To increase collaborative research
- To initiate a graduate student program
- To enhance community outreach and communication

Community Studies - DOE/State Health Agreement Program



Program Manager-Oak Ridge Project: Barbara Brooks, M.S. (301) 903-4674

During the past 50 years, vast quantities of radioactive and chemical materials have been used in the operation of DOE weapons production facilities. Unknown amounts of these materials were discharged to the environment, possibly exposing people living in nearby communities. Residents are concerned that contact with these contaminants may result in adverse health effects.

To address these health concerns, the Office of Epidemiologic Studies initiated the State Health Agreement (SHA) Program. The program has allowed State health departments to address citizen health concerns and enabled them to build their capacities to address environmental health issues. The activities supported under the SHA Program have been broad in scope and include determination of offsite chemical and radiologic exposure (historical dose reconstruction), establishment of cancer and birth defects registries, community health studies, and community health education activities related to radiation and chemical exposure. Information from these various programs are available from the State health departments or the Office of Epidemiologic Studies. All projects funded under this program are complete except for the Oak Ridge Dose reconstruction Project which will have its final public meeting in January 2000.

HHS Studies and Public Health Activities



ATSDR

Program Manager ATSDR Activities: Marsha Lawn (301) 903-3721

ATSDR was mandated in 1980 under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA or Superfund law) to conduct studies in communities at or near Superfund sites to determine if people's health had been affected by their exposure to hazardous substances. DOE's Superfund sites are Brookhaven, Fernald, Hanford, Idaho, Lawrence Livermore, Los Alamos, Middlesex, Monticello, Mound, Oak Ridge, Paducah, Pantex, Portsmouth, Rocky Flats, and Savannah River. ATSDR also funds research to study the relationships between exposure to hazardous substances and disease such as the recently completed "Hanford Infant Mortality and Fetal Death Analysis." ATSDR maintains subregistries of people who have been exposed to hazardous substances and undertakes community education.

NCEH

Program Manager NCEH Studies: Claudia Beach, RN COHN (301) 903-9826

NCEH is undertaking a program of historical offsite dose-reconstruction projects at DOE sites. NCEH is currently conducting dose reconstruction programs at LANL, SRS, and INEEL. The LANL and INEEL projects are currently in Phase I, document discovery and assessment. The SRS project has completed Phase 2, Source Term. A determination will be made by January 2000 whether to continue with Phase 3, Dose Estimates. HHS-sponsored health effects subcommittees at all three sites continue to be active.

NIOSH



Program Manager NIOSH Studies: Gerald Petersen, Ph.D. FACE (301) 903-2340

NIOSH is conducting a program of occupational studies of the DOE contractor workforce. Studies underway include updates of the Hanford, Pantex, and Rocky Flats cohort studies, initiation of a study of workers at INEEL who have never been previously studied and a multisite study of the mortality experience of female workers. Case-control studies have also been undertaken at a number of sites including studies of leukemia, multiple myeloma and lung cancer.

Goals HHS Programs

To expand on the public health agenda for DOE sites to a 5 year strategic plan

To ensure our research partners have the access and information they require to conduct activities under this public health agenda for DOE in an efficient and effective manner

To provide information to DOE elements concerning epidemiologic health studies and public health activities.

To facilitate dispute resolution.

ATSDR will complete a public health consultation to determine if residents in Ventura County, California are being adversely affected by exposures from the Santa Susana Field Laboratory.

ATSDR will complete the draft public health assessment at Paducah.

NCEH will complete the Savannah River Site Phase III exposure dose assessment.

NCEH will complete the INEEL Phase I document assessment.

NIOSH will complete the study of female workers at multiple DOE sites.



Staff Profiles

Heather G. Stockwell, Sc.D., is the Director of the Office of Epidemiologic Studies. As Office Director, her responsibilities include management of all aspects of both the intramural and extramural health studies programs. Dr. Stockwell coordinates an external epidemiology research program with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and is involved in a long-term strategic planning initiative by the two agencies. She also directs an internal epidemiologic research and surveillance program. Dr. Stockwell's responsibilities include the continued development of the office's public-use database and other health communication activities. She manages several large grants programs, including an environmental epidemiologic program and the U.S. Transuranium and Uranium Registries. Before joining the DOE in 1992, Dr. Stockwell was Associate Professor of Epidemiology and Dean for Research in the College of Public Health at the University of South Florida (USF). At USF, she conducted research into the occupational and environmental causes of cancer, including research on the health effects of indoor radon and environmental tobacco smoke. While at the College of Public Health, Dr. Stockwell developed the doctoral program in epidemiology and supervised student doctoral research. She was elected Head of the Epidemiology Section of the Florida Public Health Association and worked closely with the State on numerous epidemiology projects. Dr. Stockwell's research has been published extensively in the scientific literature. Her current research interests include radiation health effects, cancer epidemiology, and occupational and environmental causes of cancer. She continues to maintain a research interest in cancer among women. Dr. Stockwell received her Sc.D. in epidemiology from the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, specializing in environmental and occupational epidemiology.

Claudia L. Beach, RN COHN, is an occupational health nurse specialist. She has 27 years experience in occupational health and safety, litigation support activities, and training. In her position with the DOE's Office of Epidemiologic Studies, she provides clinical input to senior epidemiology staff on investigations, site teaming, and surveillance programs. She is the program manager of the beryllium registry. Ms. Beach graduated from the USDA Graduate School's Executive Potential Program. Ms. Beach served as an occupational health nurse supervisor with Chrysler Corporation, as occupational health services manager with Consolidated Diesel Company, and occupational health charge-nurse with the U.S. Public Health Service at the White House Complex. In addition, she has served as Repetitive Stress Injury Prevention coordinator for the Washington Post, and as an event nurse for The Washington Convention Center. She holds a BA in Management from National Louis University and is board certified in occupational health nursing.

Barbara G. Brooks, M.S., is a health physicist with more than 25 years of Federal Government experience in radiological protection. Serving in the Office since its establishment in 1990, she provides health physics expertise to all intramural programs. Using her broad experience in project and data management, Ms. Brooks led the Office effort to develop a public-use database of epidemiologic data and continues as program manager for the Comprehensive Epidemiologic Data Resource (CEDR). Her other responsibilities include providing DOE representation and consultation to State advisory panels that are overseeing historical community exposure studies in Tennessee and managing a university grant for research on the biokinetics of actinides in humans. Ms. Brooks' prior experience includes 20 years with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, where she published numerous reports that analyzed data on occupational radiation exposures. She received her Master's degree in physics from the University of Tennessee and is a member of the Health Physics Society.

Staff Profiles

Marsha Lawn is the project manager for the DOE/ATSDR program. Ms. Lawn is responsible for all DOE site-related activities and works closely with operations and area offices where ATSDR is active. Ms. Lawn oversees the Interagency Agreement between DOE and ATSDR and the MOU between HHS and DOE. Ms. Lawn recently graduated from the USDA Graduate School's New Leader Program, has training in public health, environmental management, and budget administration. She has been with DOE since 1987.

Gerald Petersen, Ph.D., FACE, is a senior epidemiologist in the Office of Epidemiologic Studies. He served on the DOE Task Force to establish the original DOE Office of Epidemiology and Health Surveillance from 1989 through 1990 and has been involved in all program areas since that time. He is responsible for the effective implementation and completion of National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health worker health studies at all DOE facilities. Dr. Petersen has more than 25 years of experience in occupational epidemiology and 18 years in the nuclear weapons complex. He has worked in a State health department and held academic positions at three universities where he taught public health courses. He has published scientific studies about cancer patterns, occupation and cancer, and occupational health surveillance. Dr. Petersen received his doctorate in epidemiology from the University of Washington in 1973 and is a Fellow of the American College of Epidemiology. Dr. Petersen's professional goal is to bring his considerable experience and skill together to find creative solutions to health issues as the Department turns from the cold-war to environmental restoration.



Bonnie S. Richter, M.P.H., Ph.D., is a senior epidemiologist in the Office of Epidemiologic Studies and has been a member of the Office since its establishment in 1990. Dr. Richter has more than 12 years' experience with the Federal Government. Her area of expertise is in environmental epidemiology with extensive experience in conducting health studies of communities that may have been exposed to toxic wastes or radionuclides. She provides technical guidance and information to the Department on epidemiologic activities and research. Dr. Richter manages and directs disease outbreak investigations at DOE Headquarters and at the sites. She also provides guidance and assistance to the Epidemiologic Surveillance Program and has focused analysis on illness and injury of women in the DOE workforce. Dr. Richter serves as the epidemiologic consultant for the beryllium worker health surveillance program and the beryllium registry. She serves on several Interagency Committees, including the President's Task Force on Environmental Health and Safety Risks to Children. Dr. Richter has taught epidemiologic methods to diverse audiences, and is the author of many articles written for DOE workers. She received her doctorate from the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health and is a member of the Society for Epidemiologic Research.

Clifton H. Strader, Ph.D., has been a member of the Office of Epidemiologic Studies since its establishment in 1990. He has worked for the DOE for 9 years and has done extensive work in the development of occupational health surveillance methods. He currently manages the Epidemiologic Surveillance Program, monitoring occupational illness and injury among more than 60,000 DOE contractor workers at ten sites. Dr. Strader is responsible for the development of epidemiologic surveillance reports and has lectured on various health and safety issues to numerous audiences including DOE workers, site occupational medicine staff, line management, and organized labor. He provides management support in the conduct of outbreak investigations and provides guidance and consultation in the Department's ongoing evaluation and redesign of approaches to integrate health, safety, and environment data analysis. He also provides consultation in the areas of data sharing, quality assurance, and automated data processing technology, with a special emphasis on data needs for health sciences research and occupational health surveillance. He received his doctorate in epidemiology from the University of Washington School of Public Health.

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